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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Office of Current Intelligence
24 September 1963

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Developments in Southeast Asian Countries
on the Counterinsurgency Critical List

1. South Vietnam

Viet Cong activity has intensified in recent weeks, particularly in the delta region. Viet Cong attacks during the week ending 18 September numbered 137, the highest weekly total since June 1962, and are reported to have continued at a high rate since, especially against fortified villages in the delta. Two USAF C-47s at Nha Trang were skillfully sabotaged on 23 September. The plane sabotage, together with the bombing on 21 September outside a Saigon theater frequented by Americans and the firing on a Pan American commercial aircraft on 24 September, may be the beginning of a greater effort against American targets.

While Viet Cong activity fluctuates, it has been slowly increasing since 1 June and seems likely to be sustained at a higher rate throughout the dry season this fall than was the case last year. The current step-up may be designed to exploit the government's political difficulties. Despite government efforts to portray the situation as having returned to normal since the lifting of martial law on 16 September, there is still a considerable degree of unrest.

2. Laos

There are indications that North Vietnamese troops have recently been used to strengthen Pathet Lao forces in attacks against the Meo guerrilla forces harassing the repair of Route 7 east

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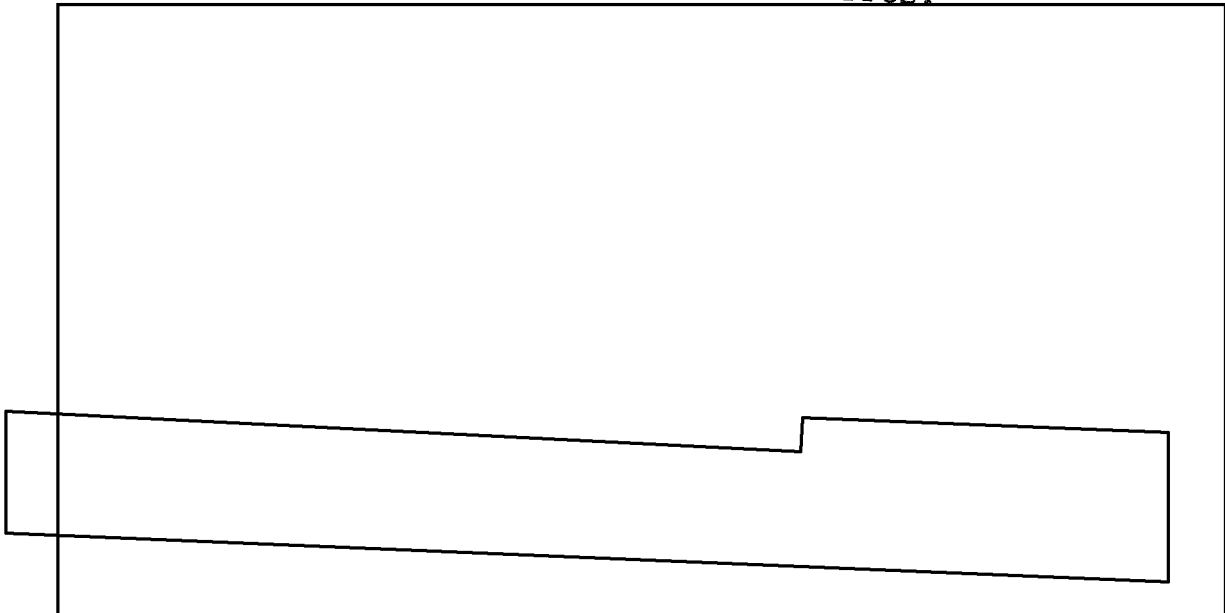
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of the Plaine des Jarres. There have also been un-confirmed reports that truck traffic is resuming along this route, which has been interdicted since early August. Reopening of Route 7 could be a prelude to increased action against Laotian army and neutralist troops in the Plaine des Jarres.

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